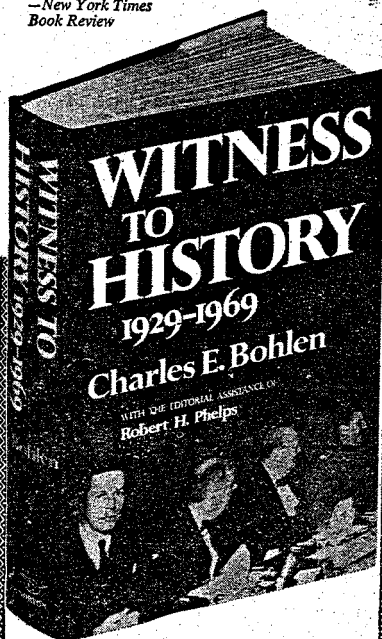


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Innocents Abroad

By SHERIDAN PRESSEY

HOW ABOUT HITCHHIKING from London to Kathmandu this summer? An appendix in Paul Cooper-Smith's *Rule of Thumb: A Hitchhiker's Handbook to Europe, North Africa and the East* (Simon & Schuster Fireside, \$3.95, paperback) offers a useful route. Cooper-Smith is also generous with tips about coping on the road; he notes that gender counts 51 per cent in hitchhiking a ride, that cooking schools offer cheap meals, that busking and selling blood will fill the till when it's low.

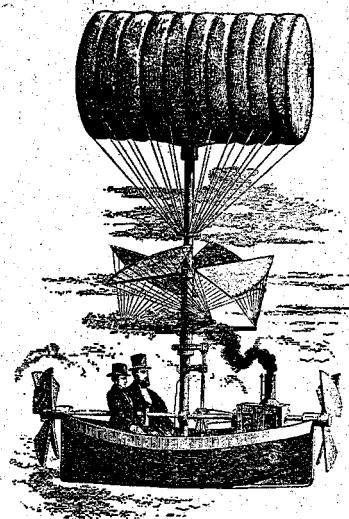
Rule of Thumb is one of a flood of new travel guides and revised editions, keyed to this season of the shrinking dollar and high overseas prices, which emphasize super-economical trips with high adventure dividends. Largely aimed at the young and bold, they are quick to recommend the do-it-yourself travel method over tours, charters instead of regularly scheduled international flights, and hostels in preference to hotels. The shoestring traveler seems to be enjoying a new respectability.

Ed Bury's *Vagabonding in Europe and North Africa* (Random House/Bookworks, \$6.95; paperback, \$3.95), now in its second edition, gives amusing and practical instruction on how to travel "by and for yourself." Bury primes us through his own multifarious experience with the ABCs of hitchhiking, car-camping, finding accommodations on the road, coping with companions—in short, building the reader's confidence to make an attempt at the vagabond's lifestyle, for all its unpredictability. Gay Bryant's *The Underground Travel Guide* (Award, \$1.25, paperback) is less personal but similarly loaded with cheap-travel advice and well indexed. Half of the book is devoted to a quick survey of 20 countries—which is to say, capital cities—from Europe to the Middle East with respect to lodging, food, clubs and entertainment. The underground traveler is apparently not much of a sight-seer, as Bryant, Bury and Cooper-Smith generally fail to note, much less describe, places of traditionally tourist interest.

Hostelers will be pleased to see the first American edition of *Youth Hosteler's Guide to Europe* (Collier, \$2.95, paperback), designed with the outdoorsman in mind. The traveler following its walking and cycling tours should count on covering plenty of scenic ground rather than European history and culture. Unfortunately, this book omits specific addresses and phone numbers of most of the hostels; for these turn to *International Youth Hostel Handbook* (American Youth Hostel Association, \$2.25).

That it pays to be young is all too obvious in several excellent new guides to Europe. *Let's Go: The Student Guide to Europe*, written annually by Harvard Student Agencies (Dutton, \$3.95, paperback), outdoes itself this year, in comprehensive, informative coverage, including a new chapter on Israel and an expanded one on Eastern Europe. The advice is sage ("We cover a lot of territory, but we don't think you should"), and the approach is practical ("Any group of people can charter a plane" at prices "somewhat lower than youth fare"). Cultural and historical places of interest in both urban and rural areas are noted and briefly described, which should please the student traveler who likes having country profiles and logistical information under one cover.

Europe Under 25 (McKay, \$4.95, paperback) is Eugene Fodor's latest contribution to travel libraries, written in hip style for "new people in the old world." Fodor groups data by country and city according to three average cost levels of \$5.30, \$10.50 or \$20 per day, depending on your budget. Like *Let's Go*, Fodor's gives its most extensive coverage to France, Great Britain, Italy and Spain. *Nicholson's Students' London*, edited by Jennifer Murray and Susan Schonfeld (Scrifter's/Nicholson-



British Book Centre, \$1.95, paperback) is a wonder. Like Nicholson's *London Guide*, it compactly offers an extraordinary amount of usual and unusual information: lists of hostels, help clinics, free entertainment facilities, milk machines and the last evening trains out of London; an array of city and tube maps; and a very good index.

While *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe* has been called "the bible of European travel," *Fielding's Super Economy '73* by Nancy and Temple Fielding (Fielding/Morrow, \$2.95, paperback), now in its seventh edition, is disappointing. The much-flaunted money-saving tips are there, but buried in tedious chat and a confusing format. The listings apply to 28 cities, thereby discouraging travelers from countryside exploration, and Eastern Europe is ignored altogether. Be warned.

APART FROM the economy guides—which aren't for everyone—Myra Waldo's revised editions of *Travel and Motoring Guide to Europe 1973* and *Travel Guide to the Orient and the Pacific 1973-74* (Macmillan, \$8.95; paperback, \$4.95) are valuable. Her readable texts amply embrace both logistical and cultural-historical information. The book on Europe is a helpful guide for the motorist, describing the character of the countries, touring routes, regional foods and restaurants, hotels, sports and entertainment. Boldface "pointers" note such details as the varying prices on Copenhagen's color-coded parking meters and the dangers of black marketeering in Yugoslavia.

In introducing her Oriental guide, Myra Waldo states flatly that "tourist accommodations are generally better in most of Asia and the Pacific than they are in Europe," which should allay the fears of dubious travelers. She writes like an old Asia hand, apparently as familiar with Tokyo as New York, offering humorous vignettes of life as it is lived only in Japan; lovingly describing the remarkable jungle temples of Angkor; eagerly pointing out India's splendid old palaces without ignoring contemporary poverty. She is an able tour guide, with an eye to fine accommodation and relaxed travel schedules, and she has an appreciation for the fascinating, beautiful and historical in Asia. It is unfortunate that Nepal and Indonesia are given only cursory attention, while China and Pakistan are omitted altogether.

FIFTEEN POCKET GUIDES prepared with the cooperation of the editors of *Holiday Magazine* have appeared in new editions: *The Holiday Guides to London, Paris, Rome, Britain, Ireland, France,*

SHERIDAN PRESSEY is a globetrotting freelance journalist.